

129.
A
SERMON
PREACH'D at the
FUNERAL

Of the REVEREND

Mr. *Samuel Billingsley*, A. M.
Archdeacon of SURREY, &c.

At HORLEY, *June 6. 1725.*

By *TIMOTHY STILEMAN*, B. D.
Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Lord
HOWARD of *Effingham.*

To which is added,
The EPITAPH engraven on his Tomb.

L O N D O N :

Printed : And Sold by D. MIDWINTER,
in *St. Paul's Church-yard.* MDCCXXV.

135

W. Musgrave.



By TIMOTHY STEWART, R.D.
Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Lord
Howard of Effingham.

The First in engraving on his Tomb.
To which is added,

LONDON:
Printed: And Sold by D. M. W. V. R. R.
in St. Paul's Church-yard, M.DCCXCV.

To the Right Honourable

Sir Joseph Jekyll, Knt.

Master of the *ROLLS*,

AND

One of HIS MAJESTY's most
Honourable Privy-Council.

May it please your Honour,

I HAVING been call'd upon
(as the last Office I could do)
to preach a *Sermon* on the Death
of my good Friend, the Reverend
Mr. SAMUEL BILLINGSLEY, late
Archdeacon of *Surrey*, humbly
crave leave to usher it into the
World under your Honour's Pa-
tronage, by whose Recommen-
dation He obtained that Digi-
nity.

DEDICATION.

As it was the Business of his Life in his lower State to do good to Widows and Orphans ; I am the more encouraged to this, by that glorious Part you have acted, in relieving, not only the present Injur'd, but also laying a sure Foundation, for the Security of all such in future Ages, (which must for ever perpetuate your Memory.) Therefore hope that in prefixing your Great Name to this, You will excuse Him, who is

Your HONOUR'S

Most Obedient,

AND,

Most Humble Servant,

TIM. STILEMAN,

[1]
[REDACTED]
ACTS X. 38.

Who went about doing good.

THIS is the Character that St. Peter justly gives of our Saviour ; the whole Course of whose Life was but one continued Scene of doing good to Mankind ; either rectifying the Errors of their Minds by his Doctrine, and wholesome Discourses, or by his Actions imparting the most beneficial Influences of his Presence ; healing all that were oppressed by any Maladies or Distempers ; curing the Sick, opening the Eyes of the Blind, the Ears of the Deaf, and the Mouths of the Dumb ; restoring Hands and Feet to the Lame ; casting out Devils ; in fine, healing all manner of Infirmities in all manner of Persons ; rejecting none that sought to him ; nay, going about, and seeking them, that stood in need of his Help ; not denying his Assistance to his very Enemies ; instructing those, who laid
wait

wait to trap him in his Discourses ; healing one that came to take him, and praying for those who actually put him to Death. This was the Course of his Life, and Death : This was the Scope, and the Drift of all that He said or did ; and from this Intent the most inveterate Malice cou'd not divert him ; all the wicked Imaginations, that were contrived against him, found no other Return but Love and Good-Will. He tells us himself, that *he came not to destroy, but to save Men's Lives*, Luk. 9. 56. and from this great Rule he never erred. He made it his Business to direct Men more plainly in the way of Life ; to teach them a new Religion, which shou'd be more effectual to their Salvation. And He proved his Mission, not by destroying his Enemies, not by calling for Fire from Heaven upon his Opposers, not by pouring Judgments upon the Heads of Gainsayers ; but by Miracles of a different Nature, tho' as full of Omnipotency, and Conviction, as those terrible Ones ; by Miracles tending to the Good of Mankind ; chusing to constrain them by good Will, to incline them by real Benefits, to overcome the Obstinacy of all by universal Kindness, rather than to convert some by the destruction of others. In the whole

whole History of his Life, we do not meet with one Instance, which can favour of Revenge, tho' so often, so highly provoked to it. We seldom read that he was angry ; and when we do, we plainly see, that it was rather Pity or Sorrow at Men's Perverseness ; and we find his Anger shewing it self no otherwise, but in endeavouring to convince them of their Error and Mistake. And the greatest of Sinners find no sooner a Reproof from him, than a pitying Look, or a kind Caution, *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

God in his former Dispensations to Mankind, chose to assert the Authority of his Laws, by severe Punishments, and dreadful Examples upon Offenders. *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* were destroy'd by Fire from Heaven ; *Dathan* and *Abiram* with their Companions were swallowed up alive by the Earth ; *Pharaoh* and his Host were drowned in the Sea ; *Sennacherib's* Army were cut off with a Blast. Every Element was made an Assertor of the Creator's Sovereignty : And the Fire, and the Sword, and the Pestilence, are ordered to go thro' a rebellious Land. Thus did God think fit to confirm his ancient Laws, and deter Men from the Breach of them.

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A Funeral Sermon.

But our Saviour now chuses another Method, and endeavours to win Men to his Laws, by miraculous Love and Kindness ; demonstrating his Omnipotent Power no less by shewing Mercy, than God had done before in executing Vengeance. Chusing to work upon their Gratitude, rather than their Fears ; and by doing for them, what they must acknowledge far above their Deserts or Desires, to render them more ashamed than afraid to displease him : Thus he endeavours to cure the Distempers of their Minds, by removing first the Maladies of their Bodies.

This was the sweet, the easy Deportment of our Saviour's Life : This the continual Course of his Practice. The great Business that he undertook ; the main Concern that he prosecuted, was *to seek and to save that which was lost* : And the Method that he used, was *going about, teaching and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Diseases among the People*, Matt. 4. 3.

From which Demeanour of our Lord, we may be excited to many good Practices, to learn many excellent Lessons. As,

I. We

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1. We may from hence be induced to the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures ; especially that part of them which contains the History of our Saviour's Life and Death : For what more profitable and useful History can we read, than of One, *who hath done all things well*, Mar. 7. 37. *who made it the Business of his Life to go about doing good?* Here we are sure to meet with the best and liveliest Characters, to be entertained with great and noble Accomplishments, to see a Pattern of unerring Goodness.

The most celebrated Heroes of other Writers, are often guilty of such Miscarriages, as the Pens of the most refined Wits can neither hide, nor garnish over : But here we have naked Truth told with the greatest Simplicity, and yet outshining the most elaborate Contrivances of other Historians. And when all is said that can be said, to draw a Curtain over base Actions, to give false Colours to a bad Design, with all the Advantages of Wit and Eloquence to recommend, to set it off ; they still fall short of this noble Example, which can borrow no Lustre from any thing but it self.

Add to this, that it is an History, full of the most surprizing Events, attended with vast Variety of Human Passions

exactly delineated, intermixed with excellent Rules, and most admirable Precepts, at once delighting and informing the Mind; wherein we continually meet with some wonderful Miracle, far above the reach of Natural Causes to effect, wrought either for the Confirmation of Truth, or the Benefit of some poor Sufferer; wherein we see the manifold Machinations of wicked Men, ever plotting against, and contriving to destroy their greatest Friend; but all defeated by the softest Answers, by the kindest Returns, and the most convincing Proofs of their Errors. Wherein further, we may admire that superlative Wisdom, that cou'd dictate those most excellent Rules of Life; that could inculcate the hardest Truths, by the easiest Methods and plainest Words; that cou'd impress Doctrines and Precepts irksome to Flesh and Blood, and yet prove them agreeable to Reason, and recommend them to our Practice.

These Things, as they wou'd recommend any History in the World to Men's Liking and Study; so they ought more particularly to constrain us who call our selves Christians: We profess our selves to be his Disciples and Followers, and call our selves after his Name: And then can any thing be more inconsistent with this,

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this, than to be ignorant of any Passage of his Life ? What can be a greater Disgrace to us, than to own a Master that we know but little of ? Who ever pretended to be a Follower of *Aristotle*, of *Plato* or *Socrates*, who had not made those Writers their Study ? And yet abundance of Men pretend to be Christians, who know but very little of Christ, of his Doctrine, or his Practice. Christianity indeed doth not consist in much Learning, in subtle Disputations, or acute Reasonings and Arguments ; but in *Action* and *Practice*. And as Philosophers endeavour to make themselves Masters of the Writings and Distinctions of those whom they follow, so shou'd Christians be able to give an exact Account of all the Actions of their Saviour, and be well versed in every Passage of his Life and Death. They shou'd not let one Day pass, without reading or hearing some part of that most excellent History, wherein they would meet with most ravishing Delight and Satisfaction. What a most beautiful and astonishing Scene may we raise in our Imaginations, while we are reading his Life ! How may we think, that we attend him in his Travels from Place to Place, bringing Joy and Happiness, where-ever he came ! How
may

may we think, that we hear with our Ears the gracious Words proceeding out of his Mouth, instructing his Followers in the most friendly manner, and confounding his Adversaries with the softest Answers ! How may we thus enjoy a Conversation full of Lowliness and Condescension, of Meekness and Sweetness, Affable and Courteous, Free and Easy ! Who had no affected Singularities, no Ostentation of seemingly high, but fruitless Performances ; who did not entertain his Hearers with sublime Mysteries, with subtle Speculations, and intricate Questions ; but with plain and familiar Discourses, instilling the Truth into them by easy and natural Parables, and using such Expressions as best conveyed his wholesome Meaning into their Minds. He did not place Religion in outward Austerities, relating to Habit or Diet, or affected to appear Somebody, by any singular way of Living : He was not over rigorous in observing Rites and Ceremonies, but yet complied with the Customs and Usages of the Country ; thereby pointing out to us the middle Way between boisterous Faction, and peevish Superstition ; but was exact in performing *the weightier Matters of the Law, Justice, Judgment, and Mercy.* His whole

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Life

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Life was spent in the most easy and pleasant, yet most necessary and substantial Duties ; in Charity, Humility, and Patience, and the like ; in Obedience to God, and Benevolence to Man ; and in such a manner as was apt to invite all good Men into his Company, and with satisfaction to enjoy it ! Particularly, with what Pleasure may we think that we hear the Dumb singing Praises unto God ! That we see the Blind lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, and the Lame leaping and dancing for Joy ! That we see whole Legions of Devils put to Flight, and dead Men rising out of their Graves ! Viewing before him a whole Scene of Misery, Crowds of Supplicants with bended Knees imploring Relief ; and behind him nothing but Joy and Thanksgiving ! With what inexpressible Pleasure, I say, may a true Believer, a faithful Disciple, read such delightful Relations, and meditate upon such ravishing Conversation !

And as this transcendent Goodness of our Saviour may excite us to the reading and studying his History, so it ought

2dly, To constrain us, as far as lies in our Power, to follow the Example he hath set us. Some Things indeed we cannot, we must not pretend to imitate him in. We cannot work Miracles ; and we must
not

not take upon us to do those Things, which He did in the execution of his Office : But those Things which he did as Man, and which are imitable by us, therein we are to follow him. Our Religion, I say, consisteth in Action and Practice ; and as Men are denominated *Aristotelists*, or *Platonists*, or any other Sect, because they hold the Tenets, and argue like those Philosophers whom they follow ; so a Christian must act like Christ : To the utmost of his Power he must be employed in doing good, willing and ready to help and assist all that are in Need and Necessity. Tho' he is not able to feed Thousands, yet ought he to deal his Bread to the Hungry, and his Drink to the Thirsty, as far as it will go. Tho' he cannot with a Word heal the Sick, yet must he administer to the Necessities of the Saints, according to what he hath received ; endeavouring to be Feet to the Lame, Eyes to the Blind, and an Advocate for the Dumb. Above all Things he must imitate his Saviour, in patiently bearing, and readily forgiving of Injuries, in taking no Revenge, but in returning real Kindnesses for Ill-will ; *in doing good to them that hate him ; and in blessing them that curse him* : This is the Religion of Jesus Christ : This is the Example

Example that he hath set us ; without imitating of whom, we forfeit the Name and Hopes of Christians.

Indeed the Brightness of so divine a Pattern may justly dazle our Eyes, and at first make us fear our Ability of ever following so inimitable an Example : But since we know that some Men, even of *like Passions with our selves*, have drawn some rough Draughts, have represented some imperfect Copies, by which we may guess at the Original which they had before their Eyes, and thereby have given us Hopes that they have found acceptance ; we ought also not to be discouraged from attempting the like. You, of this Parish, have had great Advantages over many, many others ; in having had a Teacher, who as he had Eloquence to describe our Saviour's Life and Actions in the best and most persuasive Light, so also has given you a commendable Representation of it in his Life and Practice. I doubt not but your Minds have gone along with me, and have been able of your selves, to see what a great Resemblance there hath been between the Master and the Servant. I dare believe, that had I concealed the Name of that great Person I have been now describing,

C

you

you wou'd sometimes have thought I had been drawing the Character of your deceased Friend. I speak not to those that knew him not ; I speak to you, who have felt the Influences of his Goodness, who have reaped the Benefits of living near him. I almost dare to challenge all that knew him, to say they have not been obliged to him. Who ever was Hungry, and he gave him not Meat ? Who was Thirsty, and he gave him not Drink ? Who was Naked, and he cloathed him not ? Who among you was Sick, and he visited him not, both with Prescriptions and Physic ? Who ever was distressed in his Estate, and not found him a willing and a faithful Counsellor ? Who ever laboured under Doubts or Terrors of Conscience, and found not him a Ghostly Comforter or Director ? As God had endowed him with Sagacity and Judgment above the common Level, to perceive and know ; and with an Estate, above his own Necessities to do, so he liberally drew out of those rich Stores, wherewith to supply the Wants and Deficiencies of others ; the Current whereof was not to be stopped, by any previous ill Deservings, or any subsequent ungrateful Returns.

These

These Things relating to his private Life, as you are Judges, so are you Witnesses of : And if we take a View of him in those public Stations, which God and the King had placed him in, we shall find him every where equal to the Trusts reposed in him.

Let us view him therefore 1st, As having the Pastoral Care of a Parish : And we shall find, that as he had, in order to enter that State of Life, laid in a sufficient Store of Learning, so he was both Diligent and Skilful in teaching others ; so diligent that he never heard any of his Curates preach, but always preached himself, when his Health permitted him to come to Church ; and so skilful, that he fully approved himself *a Workman that needed not to be ashamed ; rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* He was *a Scribe, so thoroughly instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, that he could bring out of his Treasure Things new and old.* Nor was his Wisdom less in making choice of what was fit to be brought forth, for the Audience designed to hear it. Instructing both the Learned and the Unlearned, in Things proper for each Capacity. And tho' I have not had the Happiness of seeing him often in the Pulpit, yet have I had

frequent Benefits of private Perusals; wherein I knew not which to prefer, either the Propriety of the Subject, the Soundness of the Doctrine, the Strength of Reasoning, or the Elegancy of Stile. His Sermons designed for this Audience, I do assure you, were well worth your Hearing, are well deserving your Remembrance: Not filled with acute Disquisitions, and needless Disputations, but holding forth the most necessary Doctrines to Salvation, impressed in the most perswasive Manner. Nor was the Pulpit the only Place of his Preaching, but in his Conversation he had a peculiar and happy way of recommending Virtue, and discountenancing Vice: He was free from all Hypocrisy, and never pretended to more Piety in outward Shew, than what was really in his Heart; yea, rather concealing oftentimes the Justifiableness of his Actions, being too credulous to a censorious World. And when he was conscious of the Justice, Equity, or Innocency of his Doings; he took rather too little care to guard them from the Misrepresentations of Evil Speakers; Candid in his Censures on others, he was not jealous enough of the Censoriousness of them: As he was
zealous

zealous for the Substantials of true Religion (which he took a pleasure in epitomizing thus, *Be good, and do good*) so he highly blamed those, who placed all Religion either in stiffly adhering to particular Opinions, or in strictly observing Rites and Ceremonies; in contending for Discipline, to the Neglect of Doctrine, *having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof.*

If we view him in a yet higher Station, having not only the Care of a single Parish, but the Inspection over those to whom the Cure of other Souls was committed, we shall find him not rais'd above his Capacities to execute it. Those two most admirable Speeches, the one in *English*, the other in *Latin*, at two several Visitations, will sufficiently vindicate His Majesty's Wisdom, in placing him in that Chair: And when we find him under the Necessity of exercising his Authority over the inferior Clergy, his Reproofs seem rather the Advice of a Brother, than the Correction of a Superior.

And when we take a View of him as a Magistrate, armed with Temporal Power,

er, how can we but lament the Loss of so sure a Protector of Innocency, so ready a Helper and Promoter of all our lawful Suits and Requests ! As he had a Wisdom able to penetrate into the darkest Recesses of Knavish Cunning, and rightly to distinguish between unfortunate Offenders, and those that offended of malicious Wickedness, so had he Compassion enough to temperate Justice, with a due proportion of Mercy towards the one ; and Courage enough to inflict condign Punishment on the others ; never rejecting the just Cause even of an Enemy, nor countenancing the unjust Petitions of a Friend ; being equally the Hopes of the Oppressed, and the Fear of the Oppressors.

Nor can we forget his steady Adherence to the Interest of His present Majesty King *George* ; and his indefatigable Labours, which he took in the Defence of the Protestant Religion, and the Protestant Succession, the Rights, Liberties and Properties of *Englishmen*. To him is owing, in a great measure, that Light shining in our Neighbourhood, whereby we are able to see through the Designs of the Enemies to His Majesty's Government, and to our
Happi-

Happiness. To him chiefly is owing the scattering those Mists and Darknes, which our Enemies wou'd have thrown over our Understandings, while they worked our Ruin and Destruction; pretending to be Friends to the Church of *England*, while they brought in the Superstitions of *Rome*. And to this betraying their Designs, to this defeating their Purposes, is owing all that Obloquy which they threw upon him; he having made all the Enemies of our Religion, of our Country, equally Enemies to himself: Had he been less good, by them he had been more commended; and all his Faults had been atoned for and buried in Oblivion, had he been a Traytor to his King and his Country. But with us his Memory is precious, and with all the Friends to our happy Establishment; and his Name will be had in continual Remembrance.

When I see that Vicarage-House, the little Theatre of his great Actions; tho' it be raised, as it were, from a Dunghil at his Cost and Charges into a convenient Habitation, an handsome Mansion; yet methinks I have before my Eyes, an ancient religious House now going to Decay.

cay. It was once a Storehouse, from whence was supplied the Necessities of the surrounding Poor: It was once a secure Asylum, where persecuted Widows and Orphans, destinated to Ruin, found a safe Retreat from devouring Harpies. There once lived an able Physician, who prescrib'd without Fees, and gave Medicines without Reward: There once lived a learned Scribe, skilful in the Laws Divine and Human, freely imparting both spiritual and temporal Advice. It was once a Seat of Justice, where injured Innocence found sure Protection, and persecuting Malice its just Reward. What Multitudes of Unfortunates have I seen seeking Redress at those Doors, coming with dejected Looks and sorrowful Hearts, and returning with Joy and Glee! But alas, how is the Scene now altered! the growing Grass shews unfrequented Paths, and the sprouting Shrubs threaten to forbid Access!

May the next Possessor revive its pristine Glory! May God endow him with Faculties of Mind, with equal Advantages of Estate, with equal Largeness of Heart, that you may never with Sorrow reflect upon your Loss, and with melancholy

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choly Hearts wish for their *Billingley* again! Let that Name be ever mentioned among you with Thankfulness to God for the Benefits you have receiv'd! And remembring his good Deeds, let us all endeavour so to follow his good Example, that we together with him, and all other Saints departed in God's true Faith and Love, may be Partakers of a joyful Resurrection. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's Sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

D

Here

Here follows the **EPITAPH** de-
signed to be engraven on the
TOMB.

M. S.

SAMUELIS BILLINGSLEY

A. M.

HUjusce Parochiæ Vicarii,
De Nudigate Rectoris,
Ecclesiæ Cicestrensis Prebendarii,
Sutheriensis Archidiaconi,
Uniusque è Regis de pace Justiciariis,
Viri Summa eruditione instructi,
Alios erudiendi arte felicitis.

Erga Deum pietatis minimè fictæ,
Erga Regem fidei incorruptæ,
Erga omnes benevolentia interminatæ:
Orphanorum Refugii,
Viduarum Advocati,
Ægrotorum Medici,
Afflictorum Præsidii.
Recti obfirmatè tenacis,
Ecclesiæ Reipublicæq;
Propugnatoris Strenui,
Non Minis,

Non

*Non Opprobriis,
Quæ iniquè congeffère malevoli,
Animi amovendi.
Qui vitam postquam exegerit honestam,
Et Apostolorum ad instar,
Illinc conviciis hinc laudibus distinctam ;
Tandem
Omnibus bonis flebilis occidit.
Maij. 28. 1725.
Annos natus
50.*

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

*Page 3. line 12. for sooner, read severer.
Page 15. line 15. for bias's'd, read rais'd.*

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

By the same **AUTHOR,**

A Short Answer to the Charge of
Schism laid upon the Church of
England by the Nonjurors, printed 1716.
To be had at Mr. Midwinter's.

Non Opprobriis
 Quae iniquis concessae sunt
 Animi amovenda.
 Qui vitam possunt exequi honestam
 Et Apostolorum ad ipsas
 Illinc coniciunt sine laudibus distinctionem

Tandem
 Omnibus bonis fidei rebus
 Maij. 28. 1725.
 Anno natus

20.

F I N I S

E R R A T A .

Page 2. line 12. for *concedit* read *concessit*.
 Page 15. line 12. for *concedit* read *concessit*.

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